

D-2

MINUTES OF BAMBERG COUNTY COUNCIL SPECIAL CALLED MEETING June 12, 2017

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, agendas for the following meeting were mailed to all members of Council, County Attorney Richard Ness, Lower Savannah COG, *The Advertiser-Herald*, *The Times and Democrat*, SouthernCarolina Regional Alliance, Bamberg County Library, Bamberg County Website, Bamberg County Courthouse Annex and a copy posted on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the County Courthouse.

Bamberg County Council met 6:30 p.m., June 12, 2017, in the chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. **Present:** Chairman Evert Comer, Jr., Councilwoman Sharon Hammond, Councilmen Trent Kinard, Joe Guess, Jr., Larry Haynes and Clint Carter. **Absent:** Rev. Isaiah Odom. **Others Present:** Joey R. Preston, T.M. Thomas, Richard Ness, Gina Smith, Dionne Gleaton, Sen. Brad Hutto, Sen. John Matthews, Rep. Justin Bamberg, Danny Black, Darrell Booker, Brenda Williams, Kathy Rhoad, Bill Johnson, Gerald Wright, Melvin Seabrooks, Liz Porterfield, Martha Hammett, Bryan Brown, Nancy Foster, Deanna Berry, Detra Salley, Mary Tilton, Jerry Bell, Robert Corlin and Norma Fisher.

Bamberg County Council meeting was called to order by Chairman Evert Comer, Jr., at 6:30 p.m., in the Chamber of the Bamberg County Courthouse Annex. Invocation was rendered by Councilman Larry Haynes, followed with the pledge of allegiance by Councilman Clint Carter.

A public presentation was given by Senator Brad Hutto regarding improving health care service in Bamberg County. Sen. Hutto stated the Regional Medical Center in Orangeburg has proposed building an \$8.63 million, 20,500 square foot emergency department to serve Bamberg County and Barnwell County. Among those present and having comments were: Sen. Brad Hutto, Sen. John Matthews, Rep. Justin Bamberg, SouthernCarolina Alliance Executive Director Danny Black, RMC Board Chairman Melvin Seabrooks and Brenda Williams, vice president of strategy and compliance at RMC. It was stated that this project can begin as early as this summer on the project. The facility will be located on 10 acres of land adjacent to Highway 70 between Denmark and Barnwell. It will be funded by the state through a one-time, \$3.6 million Transformation Fund Grant and additional funds resulting from the region's designation on as a persistent poverty area. Other funding has been committed by local community stakeholders. Sen. Hutto informed everyone that SoutherCarolina Alliance, the economic development group that serves Bamberg and Barnwell counties, is scheduled to close out its purchase of the 10-acre site on June 23, with construction to start soon thereafter. Sen. John Matthews said he thought that we were getting a good deal. It will be a 24-hour, freestanding emergency department to include a 13 room facility with 3 of those rooms as observation rooms for overnight stay. More positive remarks came from Rep. Justin Bamberg, RMC Board Chairman Melvin Seabrooks. Mayor of Denmark Gerald Wright and Mayor of Bamberg Nancy Foster. Rep. Bamberg thanked RMC for stepping up when others turned their backs on us. The project vision involves expansion to include mental health and alcohol and drug-treatment services and private physician practices. The facility will offer

June 12, 2017....continued

24-hour emergency care to include CT scanning, X-ray and ultrasound diagnostic imaging and lab and observation services. Ms. Brenda Williams said, RMC would get a little enhanced reimbursement for this project. The state sees the need for services in Bamberg and Barnwell counties. The service itself will operate at a loss, but their enhanced reimbursements will help to sustain or support the effort. Chairman Comer had additional positive comments relating to the 24/7 Emergency Department. The legislative delegation is schedule to meet with the Barnwell County Council on Tuesday, June 13, 2017 regarding the same information shared with Bamberg County. Those present appeared to be enthused about the move as a positive one and saw it as an opportunity to help save lives. All involved were thanked and praised for their work.

On motion by Councilman Guess, seconded by Councilman Kinard, council gave second reading to an ordinance to adopt the operating and capital budgets of Bamberg County for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2018, and to make appropriations for such Bamberg County budgets for county ordinary purposes and for other county purposes for which the county may levy a tax; to provide for the levy of taxes on all taxable personal and real estate properties in Bamberg County for such county ordinary purposes, including sufficient tax to pay the principal and interest on outstanding indebtedness of Bamberg County maturing during said fiscal year; and to provide for other matters relating to Bamberg County and Bamberg County budgetary matters. Voting in favor: Comer, Kinard, Hammond, Haynes and Guess. Voting not in favor: Carter. Absent: Odom.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Comer at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose R. Shepherd, Clerk to Council